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THE PROBLEM OF RELIEF IN RELATION TO THE MIGRATORY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS IN CALIFORNIA

By

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM--ITS BACKGROUND, NATURE, AND EXTENT

Background

Before the Gold Rush in 1849, California agriculture was largely pastoral with just enough acreage under cultivation to care for the needs of the small populations of the communities in California. But the discovery of gold was the incentive for hordes of people to enter the state. In 1849 the estimated population of California was 26,000. In the following year, 1850, this number increased to 92,000, and in 1860 there were 380,000 people in the state. Corresponding to this growth in the population as a whole there was a growth in the number of people who engaged in agricultural pursuits because of a naturally increased demand for food products and because many of those who failed to discover gold were assimilated into agriculture.[1] During this time the crops were produced largely for local consumption. Staples, such as wheat and hay were grown, for the fertile valleys of California could produce heavy yields of grain without much cultivation. Another factor which made possi-

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[1] "Migratory Labor in California," (Division of Special Surveys and Studies of the State Relief Administration of California, July, 1936), p. 3. (Mimeographed.)

ble large harvests of grain was that the dry farms which predominated required mechanical methods of farming for harvesting and very little hand labor.[1] The Grain was sent to all parts of the world; this was made possible because of the favorable water transportation rates.[2]

The expansion in improved areas continued until about 1885 after which date the amount of land under cultivation remained almost constant. After this date there was an intensification of agriculture rather than expansion. In 1879 the value of the intensive crops was less than four per cent of the total California agricultural production. A half-century later, in 1929, this number was increased to seventy-eight per cent or four-fifths of the total.[3]

The intensification was made possible by, (1) the construction of the transcontinental railroads, the first of which was completed in 1896. The railroads made possible the opening of the markets of the East to the products of the West.[4] (2) About the same time as the occurance of the railroads was the introduction of the process of irrigation which began soon after 1870 in the San Joaquin Valley and developed about the same time as the railroads. Because of

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[1]Paul S. Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," (Resettlement Administration, San Francisco, 1937), p. 4. (Mimeographed.)

[2]"Migratory Labor in California," op. cit., p.3.

[3]Taylor, op. cit., p. 4.

[4]Edith E. Lowry, They Starve that We May Eat, (New York: Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movement, 1938), p. 2.

the use of irrigation California has some of the richest farm land in the world,[1] for irrigation increases the tillability of the soil. (3) The introduction of the refrigeration cars in the late eighties made it commercially profitable for growers to produce fruit for distant markets.[2]

Intensive farming is impossible without a great deal of hand labor at certain seasons; intensive crops, such as citrus, grapes, fruit, vegetables, cotton, and melons must be harvested within a short period of time. The history of intensive farming is that of cheap labor which the growers have always demanded and received.

Early Migrations

The first cheap labor which was imported (it had to be imported because there was no source of it at the time in the United States) was the Chinese who were brought, not to work in agriculture, but rather to build the railroads. They also engaged in gold mining. With the first intensification of agriculture with its rising importance of hand labor, the Chinese began to be drawn upon to supply the labor need. In 1870 they constituted ten per cent of the farm laborers reported by the Census, and by 1886, according to the estimate of the California Bureau of Labor, seven-eighths of the agricultural laborers in California were

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[1] C. L. Fry, "Migratory Workers of our Industries," World's Work, XL (40), (1920), p. 609.

[2] Lowry, op. cit., p. 9

Chinese.[1] The growers were very pleased with them as the proceedings of the California Fruit Growers' Convention (1907, p. 69) indicate:

> The Chinese when they were here were ideal. They were patient, plodding, and uncomplaining in the performance of the most menial service. They submitted to anything, never violating a contract.[2]

The Chinese were followed at the turn of the century by a new source of labor which was the Japanese. In 1900 there were only 24,326 Japanese in the United States, but by 1909 there were between 95,000 and 100,000 in the United States, fifty per cent of whom were in California; and 30,000 of these were engaged in agriculture.[3] The Japanese were not as well liked as were the Chinese, for as one grower said:

> The Japanese now coming in are a tricky and cunning lot, they break contracts and become quite independent. They are not organized into unions, but their clannishness seems to operate as a union would. One trick is to contract work at a certain price and then in the rush of the harvest, threaten to strike unless wages are raised.[4]

It should be mentioned that the wages prevalent at that time were $1.40 a day with board, which might have had some influence on the determination of the Japanese to strike.[5]

It is true that although they were not formally organized the Japanese had a spontaneous organization. Furth-

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[1] "Migratory Labor in California," op. cit., p. 16.

[2] Eric H. Thomsen, "Indoor Minds and Outdoor Miseries," (Paper read before the Carmel Forum, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, October, 1936), pp. 7-8. (Mimeographed.)

[3] "Migratory Labor in California," op. cit., p. 18

[4] Thomsen, op. cit., p. 8.

[5] Ibid.

er friction was caused when they began to own land and cultivate it and so raise the price of land, which led to the passage of the anti-alien land laws in 1913.[1]

The next large alien importation of agricultural workers were the Mexicans, the first rush of whom was precipitated by the entrance of the United States into the World War, when workers were so needed. They had been encouraged for some time to enter because they could better endure the hot climate of central and southern California, and would accept lower wages than other agricultural workers.[2]

The Hindus might next be mentioned although they have been a rather negligible factor in our agricultural problem. The years 1907, 1908, and 1910 were the only years that had a considerable migration of them. From 1908 to 1920, 3,733 were admitted in excess of those who left the United States. One thousand eight hundred and seventy-three was the largest number that California ever had of them. They have been engaged principally in the agricultural and lumber industries.[3]

The last important source of alien agricultural labor was furnished by the Filipinos who were mostly young, male, and simple. The large majority of those who entered California engaged in agriculture. By 1934 there were 30,-470 in the state.[4] The Filipinos have probably been willing to work for lower wages than any of the other above men-

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[1] "Migratory Labor in California," p. 18

[2] Ibid., p. 27. [3] Ibid., p. 33. [4] Ibid., p. 34

tioned groups, with the possible exception of the Mexicans.[1]

These different racial groups which have entered California to become agricultural migratory laborers have created problems. But now we are concerned with an entirely different group and with some of the problems which their presence has created. This new class of immigrants is made up of native, white Americans who have come from other parts of the United States. The first considerable migration of them occurred after the Fruit Growers' Conventions in 1901 and 1902, which resulted in expeditions to the Middle West to induce people to come to California to work in agriculture. These expeditions resulted in the migration of about 1,000 families. But the Americans found the living conditions accompanying the agricultural work to be so bad that they did not encourage others to follow them. And so for the time people from the Middle West ceased in any numbers to migrate to California.[2]

The next large migration of native Americans occurred in 1925, at the time when cotton was introduced as a large scale crop in California. At this time the supply of itinerant workers began to diminish, for the Japanese were scattering and farming their own lands, and the Mexicans "were succumbing to the lure of their homeland's planned economy."[3] Luckily for the growers the cottom crop

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[1] Thomsen, op. cit., p. 9

[2] "Migratory Labor in California," op. cit., p. 18

[3] "No Jobs in California," The Saturday Evening Post, (November 12, 1938), p. 40.

tapped a new source of migrant labor. A steady stream of field laborers began to trickle in from the cotton lands of the Southwest.[1] These people were used to working in the cotton fields at home, and they came to California because the cotton was of excellent quality and both the growers and pickers were making money.

Recent Migrations

Now again in recent years there have been further migrations. The reason that most of these families have come is because they have been dispossessed of their farm lands in the Great Plains and the Cotton Belt. Contrary to popular opinion the drought is neither the sole nor original cause for the migrations. Because of the coincidence that most of the migrants have come from the so-called "drought states," the general public has been led to the belief that the drought was chiefly responsible for the great population shift. But since the movement continued unabated through the year 1937, during a time when the drought areas were being greatly decreased, the conclusion is that, although the drought has been an important cause, nevertheless it was just a final straw added to deep-lying causes which have been developing during the last decade and a half.[2]

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[1] Bertha S. Underhill, "A Study of 132 Families in California Cotton Camps," (California State Department of Social Welfare, 1937), p. 40. (Mimeographed.)

[2] Paul S. Taylor and E. J. Rowell, Refugee Labor Migration to California, from the Monthly Labor Review (August, 1938), of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938), p. 4.

At the close of the World War the price of wheat and cotton collapsed, causing a set back to the progress many thousands of people had made in agriculture. The depression of the nineteen twenties started the process which was hastened by the depression of the early thirties; farm owners became tenants through the loss of their equities in their farms; the process continued by tenants being forced to become laborers; and the farm laborers were finally left to do what they could to eke out a mere livelihood.[1] The cumulative effect of the successive depressions, plus other factors,including drastic fluctuations of the weather, have been the principle causes of the great exodus to the West.

There were also other contributing factors as is indicated by excerpts from a letter received by Mrs. Loring A. Schuler from a woman in North Dakota. The letter states:

> Eight years of drought, rust, hail and grasshoppers have taken our crops. Ten years ago we had a fine six hundred pure bred Shorthorn cattle. Then the depression, along with crop failure made us start to mortgage. Before long we were in so bad we lost everything in foreclosure. We are now tenants. I don't mind that. This year we had pretty good prospects of a crop, but grasshoppers are so thick we won't have anything soon.[2]

In the southern cotton states also, a heavy displacement of tenant families is taking place due to the introduction of machinery. Many farms in the best sections of the Cotton Belt are being mechanized. The old system, which was

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[1]Paul S. Taylor, "What Shall We Do with Them?" (Address before the Commonwealth Club of California, San Francisco, April 15, 1938), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

[2]Loring A. Schuler, "The Dust Bowl Moves to California," California--Magazine of the Pacific, August, 1938, p.18.

based upon tenant and cropper families on small family-size farms, is in process of being profoundly transformed.[1] In its place there is appearing an industrialized form of agriculture employing wage workers, many if not most of whom live not on the farm but in the nearby towns. The pattern of large-scale mechanized farming with labor paid by the day or hour, labor which is becoming increasingly mobile without ties to the land, is incipient in the Cotton Belt.[2] From 1935 to 1937 the common explanation the refugees gave for their plight was, "Rent broke," and, "Burned out, blowed out, eat out." Now we are beginning to hear, "Tractored out," as a reason.[3] Paul Taylor, associate professor of Economics at the University of California, believes that the volume of the stream of emigrants from the South because of the mechanization of the cotton farms may be expected to increase. He says:

> The future displacement of southern cotton workers when a mechanical cotton picker shall have been perfected is well recognized. The serious displacement now in progress in the wake of the all-purpose farm tractor has been scarcely noticed. Yet tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and farm laborers--whites and Negroes alike--are being swept from the land and onto relief in some

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[1] Paul S. Taylor, Power Farming and Labor Displacement in the Cotton Belt, 1937, from the Monthly Labor Review (March and April, 1938) of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938), p. 12.

[2] Ibid., p. 13

[3] Paul S. Taylor, Unemployment and Relief, A Statement before the Special Committee to Investigate Unemployment and Relief. (Washington: Government Printing Office, March 14, 1938), p. 1163.

> of the most important sections of the Cotton Belt. Planters are dispensing with their croppers and tenants, retaining the few necessary to operate tractors and paying them by the day when they work. A planter in the Mississippi Delta, to cite an outstanding example, purchased 22 tractors and 13 four-row cultivators, let go 132 out of his 160 cropper families, and retained only 30 for day labor.[1]

It must not be forgotten, moreover, that besides these economic causes, and the catastrophes of nature which have forced so many families to migrate to California, another reason that many have come is that they have been invited here.

> Chambers of Commerce, All Year Clubs, and such organizations as California, Incorporated, have spent huge sums advertising the climate, the scenery, the agricultural possibilities, and the building industries so that more and more people might come to swell the population since increased population has usually meant increased wealth.[2]

The growers have advertised in the Middle West to attract agricultural workers to California where there is plenty of work; better living conditions, higher wages, and better housing furnished by the growers.[3] Paul Taylor[4] testifies that the growers and contractors in California invited them and even helped some of them to come--both whites and Negroes.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 1160-1161.

[2] "Transients in California," (Division of Special Surveys and Studies of the State Relief Administration of California, August, 1938), p. 5. (Mimeographed.)

[3] Schuler, op. cit., p. 8

[4] Taylor, "What Shall We Do with Them?" p. 5.

The farm families also come to California because of the appealing tales they have heard concerning the State from kinsfolk and friends. When disaster struck the farmers they knew where to go, for their friends had sent them word from California that there were jobs to be had there; that California farm wages were twice those of the rest of the southwest; and if you couldn't find work there was relief.[1] The Works Progress Administration in California does pay a higher security wage than many of the other States as e. g., in California the wage scale ranges from $40 to $50 a month, while in Oklahoma it ranges from $32 to $45 a month.[2] The average security wage of the State Relief Administration in California is from $50 to $52 a month while in Oklahoma it is from $19 to $20 a month. Higher old age benefits are also to be had in California after residence is established.[3] The families in the Middle West recently have also been told that the Farm Security Administration would see that they got started by housing them in one of the migratory labor camps.[4]

The convenient facilities for travel have added to the intensity of the problem for California, for they have been an influence in inducing people to travel to this state. Even for the poor people, these facilities have be-

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[1] Schuler, op. cit., p. 8.

[2] No Jobs in California, op. cit., p. 40.

[3] Schuler, op. cit., p. 8.

[4] No Jobs in California, op. cit., p. 40.

come much more cosy than those which were available to the earlier migrants.[1] The cost of automobile transportation has been reduced, highways have been improved, and there have been built inexpensive auto-camps and shelters along the main routes of travel.

Furthermore, the severe climate of the Middle West makes it difficult for people of low economic status to keep warm and dry. Migrants come "from a place where they starve and freeze to a place where they merely starve," said the Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, in his address before the students of the University of California in the Fall of 1938. Hence it is evident that the mild climate of California is a contributing factor toward migrations to this state.

Furthermore, the psychological factors should not be overlooked. Two of the fundamental needs of every human being are the desire for security and the desire for new experiences. Economic changes and fluctuations of the weather have caused lessening of the workers' feeling of security in their home areas. And these changes have intensified their desire for new experience which takes the form of seeking more favorable conditions and opportunities elsewhere.[2] It is not only despair, but also hope that draws the refugees to California. They come in the hope of finding work, of

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[1] Eric Beecroft and Seymour Janow, "Toward a National Policy for Migration," Social Forces, May, 1938, p. 475.

[2] Paul S. Taylor, Unemployment and Relief, p. 1.

maintaining morale, of getting off or keeping off relief, or finding surcease of trouble, and of gaining security.[1]

Extent of Migrations

Dr. Omer Mills, regional Economist of the Farm Security Administration, states that 250,000 of these people have come to California since 1935. Almost all of them, he says, are of native, white American stock. Figure 1 on page 14 shows the number of individuals entering California in automobiles "in search of manual employment." Left hand columns in each case show the inflow of cars bearing California licenses, or those who are returning to California from employment in other states, and this per cent may run as high as fifty.[2]

The months of July, August, September, and October are the months of heaviest migration. Since these months contain the peak seasons of harvesting, it is seen that occupational opportunities in California agriculture are important as a migratory factor.[3] Year by year migrations may normally be expected to decline in spring due to a decline of harvest opportunities. Comparisons of inflow dur-

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[1] Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," p. 2.

[2] Individuals Entering California in Automobiles in Search of Manual Employment, (Mimeographed Report of the United States Department of Agriculture, FSA information Division,1939).

[3] Edward J. Rowell, Drought Refugee and Labor Migration to California in 1936, From the Monthly Labor Review (December, 1936) of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1937), p. 3.

CHART 2

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
INFORMATION DIVISION

	1936		1937		1938	
	RETURN	OUT-STATE	RETURN	OUT-STATE	RETURN	OUT-STATE
Jan	2,663	6,774	1,053	4,949	2,903	8,724
Feb	674	3,126	559	5,701	1,494	7,583
Mar	625	3,527	387	7,752	1,460	7,470
Apr	616	4,719	764	7,242	952	6,510
May	629	4,895	999	8,299	1,094	5,987
Jun	816	6,079	999	7,908	1,081	4,512
Jul	1,038	7,380	1,392	8,035	1,401	3,897
Aug	957	9,657	1,551	8,156	1,213	4,164
Sep	1,580	12,549	1,461	7,609	1,651	4,130
Oct	1,441	11,848	1,724	8,302	1,350	5,343
Nov	869	8,053	1,787	9,917	1,738	6,055
Dec	931	6,226	1,539	6,891	1,150	3,289
TOTAL	12,839	84,833	14,215	90,761	17,487	67,664

ing this period are therefore helpful. Approximate totals for the periods in the tables are: 1936 -- 40,000; 1937 -- 32,000; 1938 -- 18,000. These figures reveal that the migrations are decreasing in numbers.

Practically eighty-five per cent of the migrants came from those states which the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in 1934 classed as "drought" states.[1] It must not be thought that it was just the farm people who were dislodged by the depressions, droughts, and mechanized farming. Many of the people engaged in non-farming occupations such as miscellaneous business and industrial activities in the rural towns and small cities which are dependent upon the trade of the country-side were also dislodged by the adverse conditions on the farm.[2] The 1935 Census of agriculture in a special report showed that 11.7 per cent of the total farm residents in California in 1934 had been non-farm residents five years earlier. This shows that the dislocation of these migrants has been occupational as well as geographic.[3]

The migrants present a picturesque but pathetic scene as they trek across the country to California. They come on foot, in wagons, and in more or less broken-down cars. This is not a movement of single workers but a

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[1]Frances Cahn and Valeska Bary, Welfare Activities of Federal, State and Local Governments in California, 1850-1934. (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1836), p. 3.

[2]Rowell, Drought Refugee and Labor Migration to California in 1936, op. cit., p. 8.

[3]No Jobs in California, op. cit., p. 40.

"hegira of families."[1] Each family brings whatever it can salvage from the abandoned land:

> a bed, a stove, a tent, an assortment of cracked china and a scarred bureau, an electric iron or a vacuum cleaner, ironically useless, all piled around the children in the back of a jalopy or a rattling truck.[2]

Arriving in the fertile California valleys, and finding insufficient work or no work, they are the most ragged, half-starved, forgotten element in our population.[3]

Quality of Migrants

According to Jerry H. Voorhis,[4] the bulk of the migrants are not chronic itinerants but substantial, earnest American people who have been forced to flee from their former homes. Most of them are accustomed to, and are endeavoring to maintain the American standard of living.[5] Paul Taylor believes that there are no more riff-raff in these migrations than are found in any other.[6]

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[1] Ibid., p. 40. [2] Ibid.

[3] Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," op. cit., p. 3.

[4] Jerry H. Voorhis, California's Transient Problem, Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 1st Session. (Washington: Government Printing Office, July 28, 1937), p. 3.

[5] Omer Mills, "Health Problems among Migratory Workers" (Paper read before the annual convention of the California League of Municipalities, Health Officers' Section, Santa Barbara, California, September 8, 1938), p. 2. (Mimeographed.)

[6] Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," op. cit., p. 3.

These people have a surprising morale and a great will to work in spite of their misery.[1] An example of their honesty is seen in a destitute sharecrop farmer, stopping on the highway near Bakersfield without a tent and only some green onions for food for his family; he said that he had tried to buy a farm in Oklahoma and lost it. But he proudly declared that he had left Wagner county "clear," owing no one.[2] The migrants are not a group of "hand-picked failures," but are the "human materials cruelly dislocated by the processes of soil erosion."[3] Some to be sure are "relief chislers," but most of them are hard working Americans looking for "a break."[4]

Many people are of the opinion that the migrants come to California merely to live on relief. But Mr. John Henderson of the Farm Security Administration in his talk at the Bakersfield Conference of the John Steinbeck Committee to Aid Agricultural Organization, said that the migrants are not a group simply coming here to seek relief:

> A great many of them came here because they were looking for work and their records with our organization have proven that from the moment they set foot in this state we are not dealing with a bunch of lookers who are relief minded. We are dealing with folks who want work and who will work when they can get work.[5]

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[1] Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," op. cit., p. 3.

[2] Lowry, op. cit., p. 14.

[3] Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," op. cit., p. 3.

[4] "No Jobs in California," op. cit., p. 40.

[5] "Report of the Bakersfield Converence on Agricul-

Mrs. Dorothy Torbert, a Fresno social worker for the Agricultural Workers' Health and Medical Association of the Farm Security Administration said in an interview with the writer on January 4, 1939 that

> the largest number of families which have received relief at any one time from us in any one month was about 7,500, and from this peak there has been a steady decline, and now the number which is receiving relief is between 2,000 and 2,500 which shows pretty well that when work is available they want to work.

Here is what some of the migrants themselves say concerning this. "Relief? I wouldn't have it no way it was fixed." "All I want is a chance to make an honest living." "When a person's able to work, what's the use of benging? We ain't that kind of people." When relief is genuinely needed and it is received, these people usually express simple gratitude. " If it hadn't been for the relief groceries, what would we 'a' done? We think it's awful good in them to give us." Their real temper was expressed by a southwestern refugee encamped as a migrant on a dreary field near Bakersfield: "So many give up and stayed; they just give up everything. This is a hard life to swallow, but we can't just sit there and look to somebody to feed us."[1]

Some desirable and commendable attitudes and fine traits of the migrants have been pointed out. It nevertheless remains true that many of them have developed anti-

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tural Labor--Health, Housing and Relief" (Held at Bakersfield, California, October 29, 1938), p. 5. (Mimeographed.)

[1]Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," p. 2.

social and distinctly undesirable characteristics as a result of their occupation and the type of life they are forced to live; for to wander about hopelessly in search of employment can very easily result in a disintegration of morale and character. Peter A. Speek in his article "The Psychology of Floating Workers,"[1] explains the change that often occurs in the psychology of uprooted men and women. Speaking to this point, he says that ambition and expectancy characterize normal young men when they leave their homes to enter the struggle for existence. Life is bright and enjoyable because it is full of hope. But a different attitude appears when ambition and optimism are shattered by irregular employment. One of the first signs of a decrease or loss of morale in a worker is his loss of interest in his earnings. He quits saving, for previous attempts to save have failed because of insufficient steady income. Soon he begins to regard his earnings not as a means for increasing success, but merely as a means of fulfilling his bare physical needs. This leads him gradually to be satisfied with only casual work, and to want to be always "on the move." He does not wish to work at any one job for very long. He stays at a job only long enough to earn a certain sum which is known as a "stake"--a sum which road tradition has fixed as affluence.[2]

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[1]Speek, Peter A. "The Psychology of Floating Workers," Annals American Academy, LXIX (1917), pp. 75-77.

[2]Carleton H. Parker, The Casual Laborer and Other Essays, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920), pp. 78-79.

The single adult worker with no family ties can make the adjustments which a migratory existence demands the most easily. But sociological studies reveal the demoralizing effects of a nomadic career upon an individual who is deprived of the opportunities that a stable family group affords for personal development. Often when families are broken up during certain working seasons, the absence of the basic socializing factors of normal family life creates great havoc to personality. All this leads to vagrancy. But a man usually starts his life of vagrancy through necessity rather than through choice.[1]

The migratory workers, as a class, therefore, are nothing more or less than the finished product of their environment. They should be studied, believes Carleton Parker,[2] as symptoms of a sick social order. The psychologists have shown that "there is nothing willful or personally reprehensible in the vagrancy of these vagrants."[3]

John Barry, in an article in the San Francisco News,[4] pointed out that these people in many cases have potentialities of becoming the highest type of citizen. They also have the potentialities for becoming an army driven, by

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[1]Interchurch World Movement of North America, World Survey, (New York: Interchurch Press, 1920), p. 112.

[2]Carleton Parker was in 1913-1914 Executive Secretary of the California State Immigration and Housing Commission. He was at one time head of the Economics Department of the University of California.

[3]Parker, op. cit., p. 88.

[4]San Francisco News, September 21, 1937.

hatred and suffering, to take what they need. The course they are forced to follow will depend upon our treatment of them. Whether we like it or not, the responsibility is ours.

Carleton Parker believes that there is no doubt that the migrants experience "a high suppression of normal instincts and traditions. There can be no greater perversion of a desirable existence than this insecure, under-nourished wandering life."[1] Such a life can lead to either of two consequences: either the migrants can sink to a low and hopeless level, where through their irresponsible conduct and economic inefficiency they become a charge upon society; or on the other hand they may revolt with the result of guerilla labor warfare.[2] Jerry Voorhis[3] believes that because of their large numbers and their miserable living conditions there is a possibility of bitter, and maybe violent, labor convlict, for they have almost nothing to lose and much to gain from such efforts to better their lot. And a strike could have disastrous effects for farmers who are often hard-pressed financially. Also the farmer, unlike most other producers, except in rare cases, does not have any control over the price at which he is to sell. When you observe the position of the average farmer and then, on the other hand, the even more desperate plight of the uprooted, destitute, and penniless laborers, all the elements of a serious strug-

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[1]Parker, op. cit., p. 86. [2]Ibid.

[3]Voorhis, op. cit., p. 2.

gle are present. According to Eric Thomsen, assistant Regional Director of the Farm Security Administration:

> Our migrants form a considerable dissatisfied element ripe for disobedience. I venture to suggest that their resentment promises no peace or comfort to anyone until fair grievances have been not only recognized but removed. What then must be done beyond periodic broadcasting of the facts? I think we must at all times and by whatever means it can best be done, champion the laborer's rights as a human being and an American citizen, and we may continue to raise relevant questions concerning his present condition. For example, is the position accorded the migrant laborer consistent with our professed American ideal of democracy? or with our equally widely advertised superior standard of living?[1]

Living Conditions

Before we can answer this question we must first make a brief examination of the position accorded the migrant laborer. The housing conditions under which he lives are appalling. As far back as 1913, the situation in Yuba County became so unbearable that the workers spontaneously revolted. The Commission on Immigration and Housing, upon investigating the conditions which led to these "Wheatland Hop Field Riots," found great overcongestion of the labor camps, a lack of tents, women and children sleeping in the fields for lack of accomodations, filthy and insufficient toilets (nine for 2,800 people), an absolute absence of garbage disposal, and a lack of water.[2] Amazingly unsanitary conditions like these are still rampant today, and if any-

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[1] Eric H. Thomsen, "Why Plan Security for the Migratory Laborer?" (Paper read before the California Conference of Social Work, San Jose, California, May 11, 1937), p. 7. (Mimeographed.)

[2] "Migratory Labor in California," op. cit., p. 56.

thing they are growing worse![1]

One of the most often quoted indictments of the terrible state of the migratory labor camps was made by a United States Special Commission on Agricultural Labor Disturbances in Imperial Valley, in its report of February 11,1934:

> This report must state that we found filth, squalor, an entire absence of sanitation, and a crowding of human beings into totally inadequate tents or crude structures built of boards, weeds and anything that was found at hand to give a pitiful semblance of a home at its worst. Words cannot describe some of the conditions we saw. During the warm weather, when the temperature rises considerably above 100 degrees, the flies and insects become a pest. . . . . We found shacks that are disgraceful and a lack of sanitation in all its aspects.[2]

There are various kinds of migratory camps: some are provided by the growers, some are private auto camps, and some, the most numerous and least desirable, are the so-called "squatter camps." These last may be located in ditches, beside the road, near garbage dumps, or in any place where the workers can find a spot in which to "squat." A report published in the summer of 1936 by the California State Relief Administration gives a graphic picture of a squatter camp in Imperial Valley:

> Old tents, gunny sacks, dry-goods boxes and scrap tin. These are the material from which the dwellings are constructed. All the shacks visited were without floors . . . . very dirty and swarming with clouds of flies. There are no sanitary facilities in evidence. . . . . An irrigation ditch half-filled with muddy

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[1]Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," p. 7, and "Transients in California," p. 51.

[2]Report to the National Labor Board by U.S.Special Commission on Agricultural Labor Disturbances in Imperial

water has been used for all purposes.[1]

Naturally all these characteristics have a destructive effect upon the health of the inhabitants. The close concentration of many families, and their frequent movement to new localities, makes the control of communicable disease especially difficult. The unsanitary living conditions are responsible for a great deal of the dysentery, diarrhea, and typhoid fever to be found among the migrant families. In 1936, ninety per cent of the typhoid cases reported in California occurred among rural migrants. Besides unsanitary living conditions, the prevalence of sickness is traceable to malnutrition and to a general neglect of health due to poverty and ineligibility for State or county aid.[2]

A recent study by the Department of Health of migratory families reports "that over twenty-seven per cent of the children have nutritional defects, many of which cannot be corrected because of the low family income," and that only eleven per cent of the children are getting the amount of milk daily which is "considered optimum for growth and development, while 15.8 per cent were getting no milk.[3] One of the most common causes of disease among migrants and which is often cited by health authorities and county doc-

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Valley, February 11, 1934. Release #3325. Taken from #15 of the Bibliography.

[1] W. R. Baxter, "Migratory Labor Camps," The Quartermaster Review, July-August, 1937., p. 1.

[2] Mills, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

[3] Taylor, Unemployment and Relief., p. 1160.

tors is malnutrition.[1] And of course the only remedy for malnutrition is good nutrition. Dr. Dickie, Director of the California State Department of Public Health, speaking before the Public Health Section of the American Medical Association in San Francisco, in 1938 said, "Of first importance is the provision of adequate food for these migratory families." Last Winter a public health nurse put her feelings very tersely in one sentence: "These people need food, not medicine."[2]

Causes of Low Income

It is apparent that the appalling living conditions which result in serious health problems are due to the exceedingly low income of the migratory laborers. Inasmuch as the migrants move about so much --not because most of them wish to, but because large scale production in agriculture has produced the vast army of wanderers,[3] and because they work very irregularly--there are no definite figures available on monthly or yearly incomes per person or per family. But the recent State Relief Administration survey of 755 migratory families, average size 4.5 persons, shows that the average yearly earnings per family for that study was $239, while the State Relief Administration standard budget for the same size family was $780 per year, and the

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[1] Mills, op. cit., p. 4.

[2] Mills, op. cit., p. 4.

[3] Agnes E. Benedict, "Young Nomads," The Survey, LVII (December, 1926), p. 376.

subsistence budget for the Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics at the University of California was $972 per year.[1] Paul Taylor has estimated their average annual earnings as between $350 and $400.[2] This low level of income is caused by numbers of factors.

One factor is the nature of agricultural harvesting, which makes for much irregular employment and lost time because of the uncertainty of the job and the amount of travelling that must be done to get from one place to another. Besides, harvesters are paid by the hour and only while they are working. The money spent for travel and time lost because of rain or between jobs all comes out of the migrant's pocket.[3] And to collect in cash the little they have earned is sometimes another problem. In some crops the growers issue to the workers at the end of the picking season an order in a general store near camp. The growers are often financially interested in this store and prices are usually exorbitant. As the migrant camps are often at some distance from the nearest community, the migrants have to buy their supplies at this store. Having received no cash while working, all the supplies have to be charged. Sometimes the amount of the bill is as great as the amount of the orders

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[1] Underhill, op. cit., p. 2.

[2] Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," p. 5.

[3] Fry, op. cit., p. 608

issued by the grower. This sometimes leaves the workers without cash, so that they can't even buy gas to get to the next crop.[1]

The wage scale of the migratory agricultural worker is also extremely low. Because of the short harvest seasons of most of the California crops, and because of the number of workers required to harvest the crops (as indicated on the chart on page 25) it is important to the farmer that his crop be harvested at the most propitious moment. Therefore he tries to assure himself of an adequate labor supply in ample time for the picking period. But if the pickers arrive before the crop is ready, or if the crop fails, they are stranded there without work. Their small resources have meanwhile been used up. The migrants travel with their entire household in answer to the advertisements of the growers. The average number of miles travelled between jobs within the state is 518 per year.[2] With too many workers in one spot, as usually happens during the harvesting seasons, wages are naturally depressed. In California at the present time there are approximately 200,000 men, women, and children who migrate at some time during the year to harvest the crops.[3] Omer Mills estimates that during last year,

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[1] Louis Adamic, "Cherries Are Red in San Joaquin," The Nation, CXLII (June 27, 1936), p. 841.

[2] Taylor, Unemployment and Relief, p. 1159

[3] Estimates differ. Paul S. Taylor places the number at from 150-200,000 in "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," p. 3. Omer Mills says that "probably at the present time the unsettled migrant popula-

there were at least two men for every job.[1] He states that according to the statistics on labor requirements for the various crops which are raised in California, normally only about 50,000 workers are needed to move about from place to place throughout the year to take care of the succession of harvest.[2]

Another factor depressing wages is the way California agriculture is organized. It has developed into an industry involving concentration of ownership in a few hands, and dependence upon a large propertyless proletariat. Through purchase, merger, and foreclosure, ownership of the land has been greatly centralized in recent years; and although the area under cultivation has not expanded since 1885, in the last five years holdings of more than 1,000 acres each have increased thirty-seven per cent, while those of less than fifty acres have progressively decreased in number.[3]

Centralized or corporation ownership has grown side by side with intensive cultivation. According to the Census, a large scale farm is a unit producing agricultural values of $30,000 or over. The nation as a whole has 7,865 such units and of these 2,992 (37.8%) are in California. Less than 1/10 (9.9%) of the farms in California produce more than $10,000 per farm and from these farms come more than

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[1]Mills, op. cit., p. 2. [2]Ibid.

[3]Douglas W. Churchill, "Exiles from the Dust Bowl," New York Times Magazine, March 13, 1938, pp. 9-10.

half (53.3%) of the total crop value. The small farmers, which constitute 41.4% and whose annual production was less than $1,500 per farm, produced only 5.9% of the total crop value.[1]

The control of farms is being worked out by means of leasing the lands and financing agricultural operations; e.g., in Imperial Valley where, it is said, seventy-four truck growers control 47,750 acres, and fifty-three fruit growers control 31,224 acres.

> By such concentration of ownership and finance, 9/10 of the crops may be controlled by 127 grower shippers, seventy-five per cent directly and fifteen per cent indirectly through financial accomodations.[2]
>
> The key to profit on such ventures, California has found, is cheap labor and plenty of it.[3]

One of the evil outgrowths of the large scale corporate farming is the notorious contracting system. Most operators of large farms, whether they are owners or lessees, turn the important work of hiring seasonal workers over to labor contractors. Many of the contractors are "petty would-be capitalists without money, trading in the energy and ability of others . . . . bent of course on making as much money as possible.[4] The typical labor contractor gets information on employment opportunities, and organizes the workers into groups. He to some extent takes the place of a labor ex-

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[1] Thomsen, "Why Plan Security for the Migratory Laborer?" p. 1.

[2] Thomsen, "Why Plan Security for the Migratory Laborer?" p. 1.

[3] Churchill, op. cit., p. 20.

[4] Adamic, op. cit., p. 840.

change. The labor contractor often steps in arbitrarily between the worker and grower and he takes his toll from the earnings of the agricultural workers which is a reimbursement in terms of a stipulated percentage of the workers' earnings.[1] For example, in cherries the following system is usually in effect: The owner engages a labor contractor to pick and pack the crop. He furnishes ladders, buckets and packing boxes. He pays the contractor from thirty-five to forty-five cents a bucket for the picking. Then the contractor turns around and hires workers to pick the cherries at from twenty to thirty cents a bucket, thus making a profit of from fifteen to twenty-five cents on each bucket.[2] Sometimes the contractor even absconds with the payroll at the end of the harvest when usually the biggest final wage payment is made.[3]

Another factor which has helped to produce the low level of yearly earnings of the migratory agricultural workers is the New Deal crop control which cut the cotton acreage in 1938 by forty per cent, thus causing further unemployment. Only 25,000 to 30,000 pickers were needed at the peak of the season last year instead of the 57,000 which were needed before.[4] In 1937 there were 613,000 acres of cotton under cultivation, and in 1938 there were only 364,-

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[1]Schuler, op. cit., p. 208.

[2]Adamic, op. cit., p. 840.

[3]"Migratory Labor in California," op. cit., p. 208.

[4]Schuler, op. cit., p. 6.

000. The rest of the acres were filled in with barley, alfalfa, and similar crops that require practically no hand labor.[1]

United States Secretary of Agriculture, Henry A. Wallace, summarizes some of the far-reaching and under-lying causes of the low incomes:

> Agricultural labor has suffered unemployment and wage recessions as a result of technological advances and reduced consumer demand for commodities. It has been affected by our loss of foreign markets.
>
> The result is that farm labor in general does not get enough income to provide an adequate standard of living. The depression, its impact on farm wages, the slow development of city outlets for surplus farm labor, the growth of corporate large-scale farming and processing, and the efforts of industrial labor to win a greater right to determine wages, hours, and working conditions have produced a heightened consciousness that farm labor problems need attention.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 8

[2] Lowry, op. cit., p. 5.

CHAPTER II

THE ADMINISTRATION OF DIRECT[1] RELIEF BY PUBLIC AGENCIES

It must be recognized that the very rapid growth of the migrant problem after the depression enabled it to attain considerable proportions before it could be isolated. Soon after the crash in 1929 the plight of the workers became worse. They found fewer and fewer jobs. The relief workers were astounded at the number of them looking for work. It seemed that half the country must be in the habit of migrating for a living.[2]

The authorities began to realize that the problem was increasing in vast dimensions but no one knew the extent of the problem. Therefore, as the first step of investigation, the State Legislature of California in 1931 created a State Unemployment Commission "to study the problem and to propose remedies therefore . . . . ," declaring the Act necessary for the "immediate preservation of the public peace and safety."[3] It was not until the facts collected and com-

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[1]Direct relief means material aid in the form of cash. Indirect relief means aid in the form of lodging, medical care, and employment.

[2]Marie Dresden Lane and Francis Steegmuller, America on Relief, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1938), p. 46.

[3]Statutes and Amendments, California, 1931. Chapter 61, pp. 54-55.

piled by this Commission were published in 1932 that it was possible to get a comprehensive picture of the entire situation, particularly in respect to the unemployed homeless, as it stood in California prior to that time. There were, however, monthly, annual and special reports of individual institutions and agencies all of which indicated--what was common knowledge--that there was a rising volume of relief demands.

This rising volume of demand was obviously caused by unemployment and underemployment, and the federal government added its resources when unemployment had increased to the point where not even State and County funds were sufficient to care for the resident unemployed.[1] At the 1932 session of Congress Senator Bronson Cutting introduced a bill which authorized a grant of $15,000,000 by the Reconstruction Finance Commission for the care of needy unemployed transients,[2] and provided a Federal Transient Service Board for the administration of this fund. This bill failed to pass, but a few months later, in July, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration was set up along with the passage of other re-

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[1] "Transients in California," p. 6.

[2] A distinction has been made between the terms migrant and transient. The federal government has defined by regulation a transient as a person who has been less than one year in any one state ("Transients in California," p. 287). The State Relief Administration has defined migratory laborers as either residents of the state or newcomers who lack one year of residence. ("Survey of Agricultural Requirements in California, 1935," p. 1). For the purpose of this paper the terms migrant and transient will be used interchangeably to mean persons who may or may not have been in the state one year, who seek a living by working, follow-

covery measures.[1] The hearings on this bill before a sub-committee of the Senate in the following January were occasion for the most complete and thorough survey of the transient problem which had taken place before the Congress up to that time. The sub-committee sent an inquiry to the mayors of hundreds of cities and towns asking how they were meeting the problem of the unemployed needy transients. Here are some of the replies that were received: "Must shift for themselves"; "Unable financially to handle"; "Usual police methods, sheltered and moved on"; "One meal and gas"; "One meal, bunk, goodby."[2]

As their plight became worse, the migrants naturally turned to local relief bureaus for aid only to find that the communities in which they applied for relief felt no obligation towards them.[3] Concerning relief for unemployed transients, hearings before the United States Senate Committee on January 25, 1933, brought out that

> The public agencies . . . . have always been extremely severe towards the transients. They offer no relief except emergency relief and transportation back to legal residence, and that only to women, girls and families, not to men, even to heads of families. . . .[4]

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ing the crops. When we approach their problem from the standpoint of relief, distinctions which might otherwise be made, do not apply.

[1] Beecroft and Janow, op. cit. p. 12

[2] Ibid.

[3] Lane and Steegmuller, op. cit., pp. 46-47

[4] United States Congress, Senate, Relief for Unemployed Transients. Hearing before Committee on Manufactures,

most commonly demanded of relief clients was proof of legal residence in a state or community in which application for relief was made. The communities felt that they were bearing a substantial part of the relief burden; they didn't feel that they should use the money the taxpayers contributed on people who were not members of the community when so many of their own citizens were in need.[1] So all that the agencies felt they could do for the migrants was to help them to "move on," so that they would not be a burden on the community.

In 1932 some of the States, including California, gave evidence that they could not cope with the migrations without federal aid.[2] Because the law required that an applicant must prove residence before he receive relief, thousands of migrants were left with no means of aid since they could not prove residence in any state.

Reconstruction Finance Corporation

The federal government ultimately accepted this responsibility and in June, 1932 took the first active step in demonstrating its willingness to do so. When the Hoover administration authorized the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to make available $300,000,000 of federal funds to

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United States Senate, 72d Congress, 2d Session, January 25, 1933, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933), p.W.

[1]Lane and Steegmuller, op. cit., p. 47.

[2]Beecroft and Janow, op. cit., p. 477.

the cities and States in order to assist them in meeting their rapidly mounting bills for unemployment relief. These, however, were purely loans.[1]

Federal Transient Service

The practice of making loans to the States for such a purpose was converted into the policy of providing direct grants to the States for the relief of the unemployed. Such help began in 1933 when the Federal Transient Service was organized as part of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. The statute which established this Administration designated certain funds for the care of transients, called the "Transient Account." In the "Rules and Regulation No. 3," issued July 15, 1933 it stated,

> for the purpose of this act settlement shall be defined as residence within the state for a period of one consecutive year or longer. Hence all persons in need of relief who have not resided within the boundaries of a state twelve consecutive months may be considered as having proper claims on the Federal Emergency Relief Administration under the above section.[2]

At the height of its activity in February, 1935, this Service was caring for 198,612 cases. No migrants were made to go or keep from going anywhere they didn't want to go; nor were there any attempts at settlement undertaken by the Transient Bureau. The largest number helped in California in one month was 77,118, in April, 1935.[3]

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[1] Lane and Steegmuller, op. cit., p. 4.

[2] "Transients in California," op. cit., p. 23.

[3] Ibid., p. 3.

On September 20, 1935 the Federal Emergency Relief Administration ordered, without warning, the liquidation of the Federal Transient Service.[1] According to Paul Taylor,[2] this program was discontinued in order to remove inducements to come to California, for those people who were merely seeking more and better relief.

At the time the Service was liquidated it was providing full relief to 38,815 transients in California through the Transient Family Bureaus located in thirteen cities.[3] We don't know what percentage of these transients were agricultural workers, but it is reasonable to assume that a good number of those helped were farm laborers, since there was so much unemployment among those of this class and so many of them had been in the state less than one year.

Although the Transient Service had probably made errors in the administration of relief funds, nevertheless it had helped to ease the difficulty by establishing the principle that the federal government has a responsibility toward those people who cannot support themselves and who have no legal residence.

All the states were affected by the liquidation of the Federal Transient Service. California was one of the states most seriously affected. The liquidation caused the

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Taylor, "Synopsis of Survey of Migratory Labor Problems in California," p. 2.

[3] "Transients in California," p. 3.

state and local communities to be without funds to care for the transient. These agencies did not have sufficient unemployment relief funds even to care for their resident cases. The result of the breakdown of the federal program was a disruption in agency organization. Thousands of transients were left to face actual starvation which resulted in great hardship and suffering.[1]

Works Progress Administration

The liquidation of the Transient Service along with the organization of the Works Progress Administration in September, 1933 constituted a drastic modification of national policy toward relief. Beecroft and Janow state that the Works Progress Administration was organized soon after the federal government went "out of the relief business" and into the field of public works and social security. This reversal of policy took place, they point out, because of a definite intention of the federal government to return to the old premise that every person "belongs" to some local community and that the community where a person has legal residence should give him relief and employment under the Works Progress Administration.[2]

The new regulations directed that those people who had been subsisting on the Transient Account in any particular community were to be certified as eligible for employ-

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[1] "Transients in California," p. 4.

[2] Beecroft and Janow, op. cit., p. 478.

ment on whatever local Works projects might be set up.[1]

As an example of how the Works Progress Administration has not been of much help to the migratory agricultural workers, it can be mentioned that the Works Progress Administration laid off approximately 50,000 people in California in 1936 "so that they might take seasonal work in agriculture." It never rehired these 50,000 people, and it is now trying to reduce the rolls still further.[2]

There are no resident requirements for employment on the Works Progress Administration projects, but the local relief authorities are reluctant to certify non-residents for work, for the quotas are seldom adequate to provide for the needy residents who seek employment. The relief authorities are afraid that if there is any relaxation of residence requirements more migrants will be attracted to California which would lead to an impossible relief burden.[3]

City and County Measures

The local agencies which had been relieving the migrants were given "an impelling financial interest in keeping out the impoverished migrant" by the withdrawal of the Federal Transient fund.[4] "The pressure gauge swung immediately to the extreme of decentralization in government action. Los Angeles, the exposed nerve end in the migrant

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[1]Lane and Steegmuller, op. cit., p. 50.

[2]Voorhis, op. cit., p. 1. [3]Ibid.

[4]Beecroft and Janow, op. cit., p. 487.

situation, was . . . . on the defensive."[1] The Chamber of Commerce sanctioned a plan whereby nearly two hundred policemen were stationed along the state boundary to divert the stream of undesirables. Their reason for turning back or arresting migrants at the border who were bound for Los Angeles, was the migrants' apparent lack of means of support. The guard was withdrawn after the state's Attorney General deemed the proceeding unlawful, and when it was shown that the refugees were not seeking relief in the towns but rather were looking for work in the rich valleys.[2]

As to the effect of the border blockade, it can be said that it was a factor in the sharp decline that took place in the migrations from February to March of 1936. This fact might be used as an argument for the effectiveness of the blockade, but it must be noted that the succeeding months showed a marked increase over March in the number of entrants. This increase continued through June until by the end of the summer the influx exceeded that for the corresponding months of 1935. Much of the effect of the blockade was to "back-up" the refugees and delay them temporarily in the states contiguous to California.[3] It is illogical to believe that to turn back the migrants from the borders offers any solution to the fundamental problems involved or

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[1]William T. Cross, "The Poor Migrant in California," Social Forces, March, 1937, p. 428.

[2]Churchill, op. cit., p. 5.

[3]Rowell, Drought Refugee and Labor Migration to California, p. 6.

that any lasting beneficial effects accrue to the states invoking such action.

The blockade was but one of a series of expedient devices to deal with the problem of the influx of refugees. Another one of such ineffective and conflict-provoking methods was used in 1934, when at the conclusion of the pea harvest, the supervisors of one county voted $2500 to fill the tanks of the cars of the pickers with gasoline enough to send them across the county border into the next county, in order to avoid having to feed them. The result of this action was that the receiving county, resentful, sent back word that if there should be a repetition of this the migrants would be turned back at the county line with guns.[1] But the same county will want these same migrants back for the next pea harvest.[1]

The counties administer very little relief to the migrants because under the present law the county governments are not permitted to use tax funds for the relief of indigents who have been in the state less than three years, and in the county less than one year, except in the case of an emergency.[2] Most of the agricultural migrants are unable to fulfill these qualifications.

The responsibility of administering relief to nonresident migrants after the liquidation of the Federal Transient Service fell into the hands of the State Relief Author-

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[1] Lowry, op. cit., p. 37.

[2] "Transients in California," p. 287.

ities. This shift in responsibility resulted in a decrease in the number of transients who received aid. A statistical comparison of transients on the Federal Transient Service rolls in California in February, 1935 and on the State Relief Administration rolls in February, 1936, might indicate a great decrease in the transient problem in California. But an actual study of the situation, however, shows only decrease in care. In February, 1936, just five months after the liquidation of the Federal Transient Service, only 6,618 transients were receiving aid, from the State Relief Administration, and by June there were only 894 transient families and unattached persons scattered throughout the state who were under the care of county State Relief Administration offices. From September 1, 1935 to March 12, 1936, 3,021 transient cases were sent back to their place of legal residence; 2,598 were transferred to the Works Progress Administration; and 3,391 were known to have secured private employment.[1] Others were known to have suffered hunger, privation and death.

State Relief Administration

The State Relief Administration establishes rules of eligibility for relief under the Senate Bill 940, Ch.675 which "provides the necessary latitude for extending relief to the non-resident."[2] This law also specifically provides

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[1] "Transients in California," pp. 3-4.

[2] Ibid., p. 287.

that the migratory worker may be aided with funds appropriated for unemployment relief. But the State Relief Administration for the most part has not expended its funds for the relief of the non-resident migratory workers. Instead all it has felt that it could do for the migrants who have resided in the state less than a year is to give them only temporary relief while their residence is being verified in another state. Then when their residence in their state of origin has been verified, they are offered transportation back to it. If they refuse to go back they receive no more relief, and must thereafter shift for themselves.[1]

We can see how futile this relief procedure is when we know that the refugees see this futility and generally adopt one of two courses. In the first place, if they want a pleasure trip home to their former state from California, they accept California's offer to pay their transportation back, with the full intention of returning again soon to California. On the other hand, if they don't accept the offer to pay their transportation back to their state of origin "for a visit," and most of them don't, then they just simply tighten their belts, and with the help of intermittent work and of friends manage to remain within the borders of California for a year, so gaining the legal right to demand relief from the state.[2]

One reason that more refugees are not sent back to

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[1] Taylor, Unemployment and Relief, p. 1163.

[2] Taylor, "What Shall We Do with Them?" pp. 4-5.

their state of origin is that those states don't want their distressed families to return, even at the expense of the state of California, and so they devise means whereby they can avoid the authorization of their return. For example, the authorities of Arkansas have recently advised the migrants whose transportation back California has offered to pay, that the relief funds in Arkansas are inadequate; that the granting of relief there is a slow process, and that sometimes it is impossible to give any help at all to needy persons. As another deterrant, the Arkansas citizens in California are required to write back home explaining why they think that returning to Arkansas is the best plan for them, before the Arkansas authorities will decide whether or not they will authorize return.[1] Consequently only an exceedingly small number of refugees from Arkansas are sent back to that state.

Other states impose similar obstructions to the return of refugees. So we see that the states of emigration vie with California and other states of immigration in endeavoring to avoid responsibility for destitute farm families who have sought economic opportunity through migration.

Farm Security Administration

Because of the negative policy of the State Relief Administration the federal government has once more concerned itself with the migrants' problems. In 1937 the Farm Secur-

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[1] Taylor, "What Shall We Do with Them?" p. 4.

ity Administration was set up, under the authority of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Act, to succeed the Resettlement Administration which is part of the United States Department of Labor.[1] Because of the widespread hunger and serious malnutrition in the San Joaquin and Imperial Valleys, in February, 1938, the Farm Security Administration began the issuance of food grants to migrant families in strictly agricultural localities who had been in the state less than one year, and who were therefore not eligible for state aid.[2] It has been granting also cash aid to migrant needy. At the present time it is giving relief to 24,000 agricultural migrants in California.[3]

There are no statistics available of the number of agricultural migrants on relief. The State Relief Administration administers relief to all who qualify for it, and does not list separately the agricultural migrants who receive aid. Concerning this group of people, all that is known is that the State Relief Administration is now helping 7,000 persons who have been in the state less than one year, who are willing to return to their state of origin if so authorized.[4]

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[1] "Migrant Farm Labor: the Problem and Ways of Meeting it." San Francisco: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Security Administration Division of Information, p. 4. (Mimeographed.)

[2] Mills, op. cit., p. 8.

[3] This information was gained by the writer from an interview with Mrs. Alberta L. Baumberger, employee of the California State Relief Administration in San Francisco on March 6, 1939.

[4] Ibid.

Direct relief has been administered to the agricultural migrants in a haphazard fashion, and has been inadequate. An approach to the alleviation of the deplorable plight of the migrants must include such relief measures as employment and adequate housing and medical care. The next chapter relates certain limited achievements in these areas.

The problem is the age-old one of who is my brother's keeper? Neither the local nor the national bodies are willing to assume the responsibility for the maintenance of these dissociated people. It is important that a working solution be found. The agency--local, county, state or national--that assumes the obligation, will have control of these people. Their destiny, as well as that of our political divisions is inextricably bound up with basic economics. The one that raises and pays out the money, will control the economic structure of our nation, as far as this group of society is concerned. We have here the problem of whether our nation shall be truly democratic or not. The problem of decentralization and of centralization bears heavily upon us. The problem is acute. If we decide wisely in working our adjustment to the acute problem facing us in transitory working, then we have also solved a weighty problem of general welfare to the people of the United States.

CHAPTER III

RELIEF OTHER THAN DIRECT RELIEF WHICH HAS BEEN ADMINISTERED TO THE AGRICULTURAL MIGRANTS

As has been mentioned, the plight of the workers is due to low income, which in turn is caused by unemployment and underemployment. In the past and still at the present time, because of lack of information concerning job opportunities, much energy, time and money has been expended uselessly by those seeking employment. Lack of direction has caused many more workers than necessary to travel to the harvest in a certain locality where they have heard that work is to be had, only to find that the harvesting will not take place for a few more weeks or that the crops have been ruined by the rains. Plainly, therefore, so far as the migratory worker is concerned his opportunity for employment depends upon "information and intelligent direction with reference to seasonal demands for labor.

The State Relief Administration is bound, both by its own policy, and by the widespread demands of agricultural interests, to encourage clients to seek re-employment as soon as there are demands. Unfortunately in many localities the publicized need for agricultural workers has been greatly exaggerated. The relief clients voluntarily leave the relief rolls, or are forced by the discontinuance of relief

to seek jobs because of the reported employment. This practice has caused considerable embarrassment and cost to the State Relief Administration, which has immediately had to re-accept many of them.[1] It is evident that what is needed is some system whereby the available labor is so registered and so guided and controlled that the supply and demand of labor is better adjusted. Steps have been taken to accomplish this.

Employment Service

In 1915 an Act was passed by the California Legislature to establish free employment bureaus. By 1932, fifteen state employment offices, all city ones, came into existence. No rural offices had been developed except seasonally, between August and October. In 1932 there were four such offices. The number of agricultural placements was very small in relation to the placements as a whole. Between the years 1918 and 1930 they had never exceeded 11.6 per cent of the total placements, and in 1923-24 and during 1926-28 they ranged as low as 8.4 per cent of the total placements.[2]

In 1918 the first United States Employment Service was organized in the Department of Labor. Some direction of the migratory workers was undertaken as a war-time necessity by this service to supply labor for the harvesting of

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[1] "Survey of Agricultural Requirements in California, 1935," (California State Relief Administration Division of Research and Surveys, December, 1935), p. 99. (Mimeographed.)

[2] "Migratory Labor in California," p. 99.

the nation's food crops. In this early farm labor service the effort was made to establish the probable demand for farm workers and to secure and regulate the supply of such labor.[1]

The Wagner-Peyser Act of Congress (1933) created the present United States Employment Service. This act makes particular reference to the problems of employment for farm laborers. It directs the United States Employment Service to maintain a Farm Placement Service, the main function of which is to supervise and organize the operations of local employment offices so that they collectively shall represent a unified farm labor service for the whole country. In those states where there is a substantial need for frequent and seasonal adjustment between supply and demand for migratory farm labor the United States Employment Service has appointed Farm Placement representatives, who with the help of the managers of local employment offices, obtain early and accurate information concerning probable labor needs from the growers and other reliable sources in each farm community. These representatives, acting through the local employment offices, ascertain the probable local labor supply in order that, as far as possible, local demand for agricultural workers may provide jobs for local workers. If workers must be brought in from other localities, arrangements are made to call to the attention of nearby employment offices the

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[1]Frank W. Persons, "A Placement Service for Migratory Farm Workers," Employment Service News, V (August, 1938), p. 8.

existence of these probable labor demands. The plan is always to direct the flow of agricultural labor to these temporary agricultural jobs so that a minimum of travel is required.[1]

The logical result of this policy is that stagnant pools of workers that cannot find local employment are no longer stranded and left as relief charges upon the local communities. Also, this organized machinery for directing movements of migratory workers tends to reduce the amount of aimless wandering and also to make help available to growers when and at such places as it is most needed. A letter from Mr. W. V. Allen, Supervisor of the Farm Placement Service in California gives an example of what this service has done and is doing:

> The hop harvest has passed the peak in the Sacramento and Santa Rosa districts without a labor shortage which is unusual. This was partly due to the economic necessity for local workers to take part in the hop harvest, the large number of Midwest migrants seeking employment who travelled to the hop fields this year for the first time, and to the skilled manner in which the . . . . Employment Service shifted hop pickers from ranches where the harvest was completed to ranches that were starting their harvest without the usual interval of idleness between jobs.[2]

The Farm Placement Service in California is also directing much of its efforts toward keeping out-of-state people seeking agricultural employment from coming to California by

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[1] Ibid., p. 9.

[2] Letter written by W. V. Allen, Supervisor, Farm Placement Service of the United States Department of Labor, United States Employment Service, to the Library of Economic Research of the University of California, August 31, 1938.

means of a wide spread publicity campaign in the Middle Western states.[1] This counter-publicity, which is still in its early stages, has been temporarily effective. It is not known what the ultimate results will be in off-setting the many inducements California has to offer people in the Middle West who want to come to California.[2]

Housing

The California Commission of Immigration and Housing, founded in 1913, was the first agency to concern itself with the migratory problem. It was originated for the purpose of ascertaining the condition, welfare, and opportunities of all migrants making their homes within the state, with a view toward the removal of their handicaps. Among the items that the powers given the Commission governed was the working conditions of the immigrants, particularly in the labor camps. The Commission was employed by law, among other things to inquire into the need and demand for labor by agriculture and to devise and carry out such methods as were suitable to help prevent or relieve congestion and to obviate unemployment. Unfortunately, these powers were never made use of by the Commission. Rather it directed its activity to the Americanization of the immigrants, settling
and the improvement of their housing conditions.[3]

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[1] Letter from W. V. Allen, dated August 15, 1938.

[2] W. V. Allen, "California's Migratory Labor Problem," Employment Service News, V (September, 1938), p. 11.

[3] Herbert F. Ormsby, "California's Interest in Fed-

The history of this Commission presents a picture of growth up until 1923 when there was a period of neither expansion or contraction until 1927. Ever since 1927 there has been a gradual contraction of its activities until now, because of limited facilities its work is very limited in scope.[1] In 1933 the Commission's appropriations were cut in half and the staff was cut to eleven members, eight of whom were administrative and three of whom were clerical employees. For the 8,000 labor camps in California there are now only three inspectors.[2]

The federal government, realizing that the state was not fulfilling its responsibility to care for the migrants, especially seeing to it that they were properly housed, has through the Farm Security Administration established an emergency housing program for the agricultural migrants. Taking over from the state in 1937 two demonstrational migratory labor camps established at Marysville and Arvin the Farm Security Administration has gone on with the establishment of ten others. These camps are set up in strategic areas where the non-working members of the family can stay perhaps for a period of months while the workers harvest crops within an area that could be reached from the federal work camps.[3]

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eral Reclamation and Public Land Policies," California Journal of Development, XX (July, 1930), p. 17.

[1] "Migratory Labor in California," p. 79.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Lowry, op. cit., p. 54.

Here is an example of the set-up of these camps. When a family moves into the camp, it is assigned to a space large enough to prevent congestion and on which there has been erected a tent platform which takes the family off the bare ground. Tent lots are grouped about a utility building or bath house. In addition there is a "delousing unit," an isolation unit, assembly room and nursery, first aid room and child clinic, a garage pergola, a grease rack, kitchen unit, an office and living quarters for the manager, warehouse, pumphouse, hose cart shed, and incinerator.[1] The whole camp is laid out in very orderly fashion.

The Farm Security Administration has bought the land and pays the salary of the camp manager. The members of the camp furnish their own tents, furniture, and cooking utensils, and pay ten cents a day per family into a general fund. Every person is expected to work two hours a week. Recreation is arranged, and committees have been formed to care for the social aspect of camp life--the Child Welfare Committee, and the Good Neighbors (a voluntary women's club which helps newcomers).[2]

The establishment of sanitary camps like these is tremendously encouraging. However, the camps do not pretend to offer a solution to the problems of the migratory agricultural workers. At best they are merely a demonstration of

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[1] Baxter, op. cit., p. 4.

[2] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

what could be done by growers and federal and state agencies.[1]

The camps do not extend relief, nor would a chain of them throughout the agricultural areas of the state alter the distribution of the relief load among the counties. There has just simply been no need for provision of public relief in the camps.[2] The central committee in the Arvin camp once recommended the expulsion of a family which had applied for relief.[3]

The camps are essentially morale building enterprises. The Farm Security Administration feels that they offer an opportunity for eliminating the homeless feeling that destroys the spirit of many migrant families.[4]

There is much evidence that the establishment of these camps has brought about many desired results. "The record of the camps for elevation of morale as well as for the reduction of disease is already established," said Paul Taylor.[5] According to John Steinbeck:

> The result of . . . . responsible self-government has been remarkable. The inhabitants of the camp came there beaten, sullen and destitute. But as their social sense was revived they have settled down . . . . . In the year that the Arvin camp has been in operation there has not been any need for outside police.[5]

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[1]Lowry, op. cit., p. 54.

[2]Thomsen, "Indoor Minds and Outdoor Miseries," p.11.

[3]Steinbeck, op. cit., p. 17.

[4]Ibid. p. 56

[5]Steinbeck, pp. 15-16.

Chief of Police Dorell La Fortune of Yuba City bears out this last contention: "We are for it (the federal camp) because it gives those poor devils a place to stay and because it lessens our police problem. . . . . The migrants outside the camp give us more trouble."[1]

The attitude of the community has changed to some degree. "At first many of the growers didn't like the idea," said Walter Kynoch, City Superintendent of Elementary Schools in Marysville, "they thought such a camp would be a hotbed of radicalism. The experience here has proved that when you help a man, he won't be agin' the government."[2] According to Mr. Irving Wood, Regional Superintendent of The Migratory Camp Program,

> The transformation in the mode of life made possible by this camp for migrants is amazing to persons who believe that migrants have no inclination or desire to maintain themselves decently under camp conditions.[3]

One case history might make this transformation more concrete. A friend has related this to the writer from her personal knowledge of the case. A family consisting of a father and mother in their thirties, and four children, arrived at the Marysville Camp in a ramshackle auto. They had come from Imperial Valley, and from Kansas before that, where they had owned a small farm. They had now been on the road for two years. They were dirty, two of the children were

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[1] San Francisco Chronicle, March 11, 1937.

[2] Ibid.

[3] "Migratory Labor in California," p. 86.

sick, the father was suffering from pellagra, and they were almost totally discouraged. As a result of the facilities at the camp, the father was treated and got well, the children were washed up and taken care of, the mother was able to use the camp sewing machine to good advantage, the women of the camp helped make quilts to replace the gunny-sack bedding the family had been using. Within six weeks the family was back on its feet, the children gained in weight, the woman began to take an active part in the camp life, and in short they were scarcely recognized as the same people who had come in so forlorn and hopeless.

Medical Care

One of the major needs of the agricultural migrant is that of medical care. The control of communicable diseases falls within the province of the Public Health Service and is being taken care of by the State Department of Public Health in cooperation with the County Health Departments. Every year from sixty to seventy thousand families are vaccinated and innoculated against small pox, typhoid, diphtheria, and other communicable diseases.[1] As a result of the emphasis of the Department of Public Health upon the prevention of disease rather than its care and treatment there was until last year, a considerable gap between the need for medical services among the migrant families and the facilities at their disposal.

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[1] Mills, op. cit., p. 6.

Last year, because the vast majority of the migrants cannot afford the usual fees of private doctors, and so many of them do not have county residence and so cannot receive aid from the county hospitals except in the case of an emergency, an intermediary was provided for them. This is the Agricultural Workers Health and Medical Association, which has been providing both medical and hospital care for the families of the migratory agricultural workers who have been in this state less than one year.

This Association was formed on May 2; it was incorporated under California laws and supplied with an initial grant of $100,000 by the Farm Security Administration.[1] The Farm Security Administration was not the sole agency responsible for the development of the Association for it represented the combined efforts of the California Medical Association, the State Board of Health, and the State Relief Administration.[2]

The headquarters are in Fresno, and its services are available through district offices set up in those counties which have large numbers of migrants who are in dire need of medical care. Every office is staffed with medical and social workers, who investigate and approve or reject all ap-

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[1] Davis McEntire, "Migrants and Resettlement in the Pacific Coast States," Land Policy Review, V. No. 2 (July-August, 1938), p. 4.

[2] Edward J. Rowell, "The Child in the Migratory Camp--Health," California Children, Vol. I. No. 9 (September 15, 1938), p. 3.

plication for medical aid. Acceptance of an application confers "membership" in the Association upon the client, who then becomes eligible to the organization's benefits. An important consideration of membership is that each client is free to choose the doctor or hospital he desires so long as the name of that practitioner or institution appears on the list of services cooperating with the Association.[1]

Those who receive aid from the Association do not feel that they are receiving relief, but that they are truly members of a co-operative organization. This is an important consideration with these independent, self-reliant American workers whose strong disapproval of unworked for charity must be taken into account.[2]

In performing its functions, the employees of the Association interpret their field of activities rather liberally. For example, one of the first cases of the Association was that of a mother whose child was ill. The consulted pediatrician's prescription was dietary rather than medical. His order for fresh milk, orange juice, and strained vegetables was treated, however, as a medical prescription and arrangements were immediately made with a grocery store to obtain the necessary food.[3] Innumerable cases could be cited of the excellent quality of the work and prompt service

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[1] Farm Security Administration's Low-cost Medical Program, Published by the Farm Security Administration, 1938, pp. 7-8.

[2] Ibid., p. 8.

[3] Rowell, "The Child in the Migratory Camp--Health," p. 4.

of the physicians and hospitals working in co-operation with the Association.

More than 15,000 cases have been cared for in California and Arizona (the Association operates as a "foreign corporation" in Arizona); 1,400 of the cases required surgical care, 400 were appendectomies and tonsilectomies, and 500 were maternity cases. This service has halted threatened epidemics of malaria and scarlet fever.[1]

Between the preventive program of the State Department of Public Health, the standards of sanitation set in the federal camps, and the opportunities for care and treatment of diseases available to the agricultural migratory workers by the Agricultural Workers Health and Medical Association, progress is being made toward the solution of the health problems of the migratory worker. But much remains to be done.

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[1] Fresno Bee, December 31, 1938.

CHAPTER IV

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PRIVATE SOCIAL AGENCIES

Very little relief work has been done for the migratory agricultural workers by the private social agencies. There are reasons for this. For one thing, the work of private agencies have always been limited financially. In fact, because of lack of funds, private agencies, as well as public ones in many communities, are taking definite steps to discourage migrants from applying for assistance. Many needy ones do not have the opportunity to register for relief or even to make their needs known.[1] The Community Chest in some regions, including Los Angeles, has forbidden some of the private agencies as e.g., the Family Division of the Bureau of Catholic Charities, to give relief to transients.[2]

Father Charles Philipps, Pastor of the St. Mary's Catholic Church in Oakland and Director of the Rural Life Bureau of the Archdioces of San Francisco, in an interview with the writer revealed some reasons why he thought that the church is unable to do much to improve the living conditions of the migrants. He explained that some of the forces

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[1] Migrants and Their Problems (The Child, August, 1937), p. 35.

[2] "Transients in California," p. 46.

working against improvement of the situation are vigilantism and fascistic trends, blacklisting, and the conspiracy of certain big corporations to suppress labor organization and labor legislation. These corporations work through such channels as the Associated Farmers of California, Inc., California State Chamber of Commerce, and the California Manufacturers' Association. These organizations, he believes, which are hindering the improvement of the conditions of the migrants, possess a power and force which, under the present social and economic conditions, cannot be matched by the private social agencies and churches which rest upon voluntary contributions for support.

Emergency Aid

Aside from these factors there is the big factor of indifference. It is so natural for people to be unaware of the distress of others. It often takes a catastrophe of nature to wake people up. How helpful and sacrificing people are in such emergencies. This was shown after the San Francisco earthquake. Again the citizens were aroused into cooperation during the flood in the San Joaquin Valley in the spring of 1938.

During the period of the flood the Red Cross was naturally the first to extend aid, but it was not able to cope adequately with the emergency. Therefore the Citizens' Emergency Committee of San Francisco to Aid Flood Relief was formed when the Simon J. Lubin Society in March invited club women, church groups, the Red Cross and interested political

and labor groups to join in giving flood relief. Mrs. Robert McWilliams was drafted chairman and Mrs. Robert Hugh Donaldson, who had many contacts with the Works Progress Administration and State Emergency Relief Administration supplies, was drafted to serve on promotion work. During the two months in which the Committee operated, tons of clothing, bedding and food supplies were shipped daily to the Valley. The material was shipped by volunteer service on the part of Lyons, Bekins, and other storage companies.[1]

Those in the Bay Region who desired to aid the distressed migratory workers by giving warm clothing, blankets and non-perishable food were asked to take such supplies to the following depots in San Francisco: the First Congregational Church, the Simon J. Lubin Society, Grace United Church of the Mission, the Temple Beth Shalom, and to any San Francisco firehouse. Those in Oakland were asked to take their contributions to St. Mary's Church and the First Baptist Church. In Berkeley the gathering point for the contributions was the St. Mark's Episcopal Church.[2]

Besides the clothing and food supplies that were privately donated, the Junior Chamber of Commerce donated tobacco and Guittards and Ghirardellis gave sweet chocolate.[3]

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[1]Letter from Dillon Wesley Throckmorton, to the writer. February 28, 1939.

[2]Labor Herald. March 24, 1938.

[3]Letter to Mr. Fred Goodcell, Secretary Associated Farmers from Mrs. Robert McWilliams, March 24, 1938.

By April 30, financial contributions from individuals and groups, including the Congregational-Methodist Church in San Francisco and the Ck. Amer. Jugo. Slave. Women's Club, Lincoln Park Women's Club, and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, amounted to over $80.00.[1] Regarding the funds, Reverend D. W. Throckmorton, Treasurer, said, "we made no special effort to receive money other than to help us in transportation and general promotion work. $122.30 was the total amount used during the work in the interest of the migrants."[2]

The supplies were sent down to the flood areas to the Farm Security Administration, the State Relief Administration, and Dr. Lee Stone, Health Director of Madera County, for distribution. The Associated Farmers expressed a desire to aid the flood sufferers and so were also instrumental in the distribution of the supplies.[3] Gasoline and money for the distribution of the supplies were donated by Fresno business men.[4] Scores of letters were received by Mrs. McWilliams from those in the camps who received the boxes of supplies. The letters revealed the dire need of the stranded

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[1]Financial Report of the San Francisco Committee for Migratory Flood Relief by D. W. Throckmorton, Treasurer, April 30, 1938.

[2]Letter from Dillon Wesley Throckmorton to the writer. February 28, 1939.

[3]Letter to Dr. Lee Stone, Health Director of Madera County, from Mrs. R. McWilliams. March 24, 1938.

[4]Letter to Mrs. McWilliams from Lillian Monroe. March 27, 1938.

migrants for the supplies and the gratitude on their part for them. The letters tell how the migrants were hemmed in by water and mud in some cases for nine or ten weeks, so that they were unable to go to those places where they might receive relief, or to where they might buy food and clothing if they had the money. One family was found living on grass that grew along the ditchbank.[1] Excerpts from two of the letters received, dated March 29, and April 2, respectively, indicate the need of the migrants and their attitude concerning the aid they received:

> We received 5 boxes of clothing. We need it very bad. We are picking cotton and making about 65¢ a day. We cannot get on relief.
>
> Our famouly have to live on what we can make picking cotton. We just started worke a few days ago because the flood kept us from working.
>
> We are very Greatful for thease clothes that was sent down to us.[2]

> During the flood we couldn't get out of the camps to town. This is the first relief we have received in our camp. The children haven't been going to school because of not having enough clothes.[3]

But as always happens after an emergency is over, most of the people and organizations which co-operated to help the flood victims, after the crisis had passed, seemed soon to forget that the migrants existed and that they still needed help, even as they did during the period of the flood.

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[1]Letter to Mrs. R. McWilliams from Lillian Monroe. March 31, 1938.

[2]Letter to Mrs. R. McWilliams from Rosetta Powers, from Firebaugh, California on April 2, 1938.

[3]Letter to Mrs. R. McWilliams from Calletane Andas, Yocum Camp, Riverdale, California, March 29, 1938.

Salvation Army

One of the private agencies most often associated in the minds of the public with relief to transients is the Salvation Army. This is primarily a religious organization and is especially concerned with the down and out person. It has done most of its work with the homeless men in the towns. There are, however, no records of any work done by it for the agricultural migratory families.

There is a program drawn up by Bert Hilborn, Salvation Army executive, which aims at colonizing large groups of dust bowl migratory families in California. Mr. Hilborn says that there is a group of bankers in Glendale which proposes to lend land to the families in much the same way that money is lent. The land that would be used would be property that had been acquired by banks by foreclosure for the most part. The part of the Salvation Army and other welfare agencies, Mr. Hilborn states, would be to certify the migrant families as eligible to participate in the program.[1]

Educational Work

Much educational work is being done at the present time. Church organizations and Young Women's Christian Associations have conducted tours into the labor camps so that citizens could see the living conditions and working conditions of the migrants. Educational forums are being conducted by various groups in an effort to arouse the citizens

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[1] Fresno Bee, November 19, 1938.

into action for the amelioration and elimination of the problems of the migrants. Many of the California branches of the American Association of University Women have for the year 1939 taken as their study project the subject of the agricultural migratory worker in California.[1]

The "one-third of the nation Christmas party" last year has done much to bring to the attention of the nation's public the depressing problems of rural poverty. This party was organized by the John Steinbeck Committee to Aid Agricultural Organization and the Hollywood Citizens'-News branch of the Newspaper Guild with the assistance of a number of Hollywood celebrities. Some of the groups which sponsored and supported the affair were: National Youth Administration, New York Save the Children Fund, American League for Peace and Democracy, League of Women Shoppers, Farm Security Administration, and the Simon J. Lubin Society.[2]

At the party at the Shafter migratory workers camp on December twenty-fourth, two widely separated classes in American economic life--glamorous Hollywood motion picture stars and poverty stricken migratory workers--joined in staging the nation's biggest Christmas party. Five thousand under privileged migrants and their children were the guests of the screen celebrities. The migrants themselves provided orchestral and vocal numbers.[3] Toys, fruits, nuts, and candy

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[1]Letter to the writer from Mrs. E. R. Lewis of San Francisco, an executive of the American Association of University Women. Dated March 10, 1939.

[2]Peoples' World. December 22, 1938.

[3]Berkeley Gazette. December 12, 1938.

were given to the children.

The real purpose of the party, explained the sponsors, was to call the attention of the nation to the serious problems of the migratory families who have been forced out of the Middle West and are now living in California under subnormal living conditions.[1] The party was broadcasted over the transcontinental red net work of the National Broadcasting System so that the whole country would recognize the problem to be a national one and would feel that the state, federal and local governments must coordinate their activities so that the people may be rehabilitated in accordance with American standards.[2]

Save the Children Fund

The Save the Children Fund, a national organization, modeling its program on the extensive work in the Southern Mountains and in other neglected rural areas of our country, accepted as its first California project the task of aiding the agricultural workers of the Imperial and San Joaquin Valleys. Marshalling all local resources possible, coordinating the efforts of local agencies, and adapting the program to meet the requirements of an ever shifting need, the Save the Children Fund has for the past three years helped to feed, clothe, and succor the neglected children of this area.[3]

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[1] Fresno Bee. December 24, 1938. [2] Ibid.

[3] Letter from Fred A. McCarl, Director of the Save the Children Fund California Committee to the writer, March 1, 1939.

Contributions of the Churches

Most of the contributions of the churches at the present time are made through the Council of Women for Home Missions, through which the churches of seventeen denominations, in unified effort are working to improve the conditions in the migrant labor camps. This they strive to do by acquainting communities with the social and economic injustices, thereby changing the attitudes toward the migrants and making possible the enactment of protective legislation. As a second means of helping to improve the living conditions of the migrants, the Council helps to meet the immediate physical and spiritual needs of the migrants through public health nurses, recreational directors, visiting teachers and religious education leaders in the agricultural areas.[1]

A grant in California under the Social Security act to the Council of Women for Hom Missions made possible a staff of three workers--a physician, nurse, and social service workers, which serve in the department of child hygiene. These workers have state-wide authority. This made possible the establishment of a series of clinics in the fields where there were migratory workers employed.[1] These workers must meet the emergencies of sudden illness, child birth, accidents, small pox and typhoid epidemics and death. Then enlist the help of physicians, hospital authorities, welfare

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[1]From an interview with Miss Lulu Meadows, who works with the children in the camps of the Council of Women for Home Missions, March 6, 1939.

[2]Lowry, op. cit., p. 53.

departments and local churches to provide the physical needs and the spiritual care.[1]

Churches throughout the United States make contributions of money, food, clothing, and bedding to the California migrants through this Council.

Mrs. F. E. Shotwell, Secretary of the Council of Women for Home Missions, states that though lack of funds restricts the work of the Council, it has set these goals for 1939: to continue the nursing service, to expand the recreational center project, to conduct more vacation school and summer projects, using student leaders, and to develop a promotional program to acquaint local churches with the program of the Council.[2]

The Society of Missionary Catechists of the Catholic Church is making some contributions. It gives Catechetical or religious instruction regularly to about 1200 Catholic children in the districts of Gustine, Los Banos, Dos Palos, Firebaugh, and Mendota, and in the larger cotton camps near these places. It also co-operates with other organizations to obtain relief for needy families and work to improve the home conditions wherever possible.[3]

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[1]Interview with Miss Lulu Meadows.

[2]F. E. Shotwell, Report of Migrant Work--1938. Western Area. Council of Women for Home Missions. (Mimeographed.)

[3]Letter from Catechist E. Furst of the Society of Missionary Catechists of Our Blessed Lady of Victoria, February 28, 1939, from Los Banos, California.

Concerning the viewpoint of the Catholic Church, here is quoted a special passage from the Encyclical letter of the late Pope Pius XI on "Reconstructing the Social Order" which refers to the agricultural workers. It reads:

> Moreover, there is the immense army of hired laborers, whose condition is depressed in the extreme, and who have no hope of ever obtaining a share in the land. These . . . . unless efficacious remedies be applied, will remain perpetually sunk in the proletarian condition.[1]

These words of of Pope Pius XI are being heeded by various interested groups and individuals. The important question is what are the efficacious remedies to be applied, that will raise these agricultural workers out of their proletarian condition.

Private social agencies are much more responsive to local conditions and to immediate problems than are our bureaucratic political organizations; it is necessarily so. But this is not a virtue in itself. It is an indictment, rather, of our social order. Public agencies should be first to answer the cry of human misery. They can be when they are strictly administrative agencies. Public agencies, well administered are far superior to private agencies as administrators of direct and of indirect relief. The main trouble with private relief is a double one. First, there is a lack of discrimination on the part of the dispenser of aid. Secondly, there is a terrible and growing tendency for

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[1] Pope Pius XI. Quadri esimo Anno, "Reconstructing the Social Order," New York: Paulist Press, 1931. p. 18.

the condition to become worse rather than better. Those on relief rolls, tend to play safe and to keep on receiving a small pittance rather than to chance receiving a larger income. Many who have been on private relief would have been sent to hospitals had they been on public relief. Many such could be cured of alcoholism and of various disabilities and made able, physically and mentally, to cope with the world in which they live.

CHAPTER V

PROPOSED REMEDIES

The present relief and welfare program for the agricultural migrants is chaotic, overlapping, uncorrelated, duplicated, and futile. It can be seen that the administration of relief has not been the smoothly working affair that it was once hoped it would be. It has not been a routine matter consisting of the simple observance of provisions and regulations.[1] John Steinbeck cites as an example of the inadequacy of the present relief system the history of one family in relation to work and medical and direct relief:

> . . . . The family consisted of five persons. . . . . They came from Oklahoma . . . . . to California . . . . . in time for the orange picking in Southern California and put in a good average season.
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> The older boy and the father together made $60. At that time the automobile broke out . . . . and the repairs . . . . took $22. The family moved into Kern County to chop grapes and camped in the squatters' camp on the edge of Bakersfield.
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> At this time the father sprained his ankle and the little girl developed measles. Doctors' bills amounted to $10 of the remaining store, and food and transportation took most of the rest.
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> The 15-year old boy was now the only earner in the family. The 12-year old boy picked up a brass gear in a yard and took it to sell.
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> He was arrested and taken before the juvenile court, but was released to his father's custody. The father walked in to Bakersfield from the squatters' camp on a sprained ankle because the gasoline was gone from the automobile and he didn't dare invest any of the remain-

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[1] Marie Dresden Lane and Francis Steegmuller, America on Relief, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1938), p. 10.

ing money in more gasoline.

The walk caused complications in the sprain which laid him up again. The little girl had recovered from measles by this time, but her eyes had not been protected and she had lost part of her eyesight.

The father now applied for relief and found that he was ineligible because he had not established the necessary residence. All resources were gone. . . . . A little food was given . . . . . .

At this time the 15-year old boy came home from the fields with a pain in his side. He was feverish and in great pain.

The mother put hot cloths on his stomach while a neighbor took the crippled father to the county hospital to apply for aid. The hospital was full, all its time taken by bona fide local residents. The trouble described as a pain in the stomach by the father was not taken seriously.

The father was given a big dose of salts to take home to the boy. That night the pain grew so great that the boy became unconscious. The father telephoned the hospital and found that there was no one on duty who could attend to his case. The boy died of a burst appendix the next day.

There was no money. The county buried him free. The father sold the Dodge for $30 and bought a $2 wreath for the funeral. With the remaining money he laid in a store of cheap, filling food--beans, oatmeal, lard. He tried to go back to work in the fields. Some of the neighbors gave him rides to work and charged him a small amount for transportation.

He was on a weak ankle too soon and could not make over 75¢ a day at piece-work, chopping. Again he applied for relief and was refused because he was not a resident and because he was employed. The little girl, because of insufficient food and weakness from measles, relapsed into influenza.

The father did not try the county hospital again. He went to a private doctor who refused to come to the squatters' camp unless he were paid in advance. The father took the girl's temperature, gave the mother seven pills, told the mother to keep the child warm and went away. The father lost his job because he was too slow.

He applied again for help and was given one week's supply of groceries.[1]

Federal Solution Required

Thousands of case histories like this one could be

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[1]Steinbeck, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

told. It could be argued that there were ways in which this man could have gotten aid, but, if there were means, he had no way of discovering them. We cannot blame our state administrators and legislators for the present state of affairs. They are not perfidious or inhumane. They have failed to meet the distress of the migrants because their problem inherently transcends state powers and responsibilities.[1] California is not to be blamed for the fact that she has been called upon to employ or provide relief for thousands of families which have come from other parts of the nation. She cannot handle this problem alone; she needs federal aid. Many agencies, both public and private, realizing the magnitude and complexity of the problem, recognize that the only possible solution to the problem is a national one.

We must remember that the officials in any state, county, or city will never be persuaded that the maintenance and much less the rehabilitation of the workless migratory population is the charge of local taxpayers. They realize that there is a penalty for a positive and generous policy; the unemployed from other states would flow in in impossible numbers. "Absence of a national policy, therefore, means almost total neglect of the migratory population."[2] A national policy will have to comprehend the interest of both the states who are losing this population-on-the-march, and the states which are receiving it.

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[1]Taylor, "What Shall We Do with Them," p. 5.

[2]Beecroft and Janow, op. cit., p. 2.

There is needed adequate care in each state for citizens seeking new opportunities. This care must be financed by the federal government. We need a federal program of relief with federal requirements for application for relief; the settlement laws constitute the main barrier between the migrant and his welfare.

> The welfare of man should be given precedence over the frigid technicalities of the law. The laws that are harmful to the real 'forgotten man,' the transient, are man-made to destroy man.[1]

This could be prevented by the passage of the Voorhis bill.

The Voorhis bill, R. H. 9256, 75th Congress, has been introduced in the House. It seeks to provide federal aid to those people who are classified as interstate transients. The bill provides that a person shall not lose his residence in one state until he has acquired residence in another. Until this bill is passed there will be a growing number of federal transients. According to Paul S. Taylor:

> This bill . . . . is designed to solve some of the inconsistencies and the worst evils of the settlement laws of various states which make these people federal transients and by its offer to extend federal aid to states which formulate plans approved by a federal agency, the Social Security Board, the states can be brought, I believe, and should be brought to adopt uniform standards of residence, so that one state or another shares the responsibility and we do not see the development of a homeless group of people, with no ties, no responsibilities, except that of the federal government.[2]

Interested and thoughtful persons and groups are strongly advocating the passage of this bill. Mr. Taylor

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[1] The Catholic Worker, April, 1938.

[2] Taylor, Unemployment and Relief, p. 1169.

says that for reasons not only of common humanity but also for state economy we should urge the passage of the Voorhis bill.[1]

Legislative Action

Because of the awareness of the public about the plight of the migrant and the realization that the federal program so far has not solved the problem, concerted action on the part of some of the states resulted in the Hope Resolution, Senate Resolution, No. 298, which resolves:

> . . . . that the Secretary of Labor is hereby authorized and directed to study, survey, and investigate the social and economic needs of laborers migrating across state lines, obtaining all facts possible in relation thereto which would aid the Congress and the states in enacting remedial legislation. The Secretary of Labor shall report to the Senate, with recommendations for legislation.[2]

Although no appropriations were made to facilitate this study, a union of forces within the several departments of the federal government, under the direction of the Secretary of Labor in carrying out the mandate of Congress, has resulted in a comprehensive evaluation being taken of the situation.[3]

This action with its ensuing results is indicative of the value of the efforts of constituents to stimulate action by the federal government toward a solution to the problems of the migrants.

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[1] Taylor, "What Shall We Do with Them?" p. 5.

[2] "Transients in California," pp. 288-289.

[3] The Unsolved Problem of the Transient Unemployed, (Committee on Care of Transients and Homeless, New York, May, 1937), p. 11.

The Committee on Care of Transients and Homeless, made up of some thirty influential and responsible persons affiliated with national agencies, has submitted to the Senate complete details on the plight of the migrant person and family.[1] This committee is urging that people in various parts of the country send letters to Washington describing the conditions under which the migrants live. It is hoped that this will provide facts upon which remedial legislation can be based.[2]

The approach to the solution of the problems of the migrants must be two-fold. Everything possible must be done to relieve the present hardships. Also, there must be an attack upon the underlying causes.

Relief

Any future approach to the problem must consider remedial measures in terms of specific handicaps to be overcome. Such an approach must first be directed toward the administration of relief--the first thing that the migrant needs.[3] Perhaps the most serious immediate problem which the migrant faces is the difficulty he encounters when he tries to get relief.

There have been several bills introduced in Congress to provide federal relief for migrants, but none of them have

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[1] The Catholic Worker, May 1938.

[2] The Unsolved Problem of the Transient Unemployed, p.11.

[3] Ellen C. Potter, "Letter commenting on the Wickenden article, 'Mobility in Trouble,'" Survey, November, 1937. p.362.

been passed yet. The only step that has been made in this direction is the emergency action of the Farm Security Administration to provide cash grants and commodities to migrant families who have been in the state less than one year.

In regard to relief, the John Steinbeck Committee has recommended that until the Voorhis bill is passed--this provides for aid to transients under the Social Security Board at the point where relief is needed--the Farm Security Administration aid should be given to all in need who have been in the state less than one year. For those who have been in the state more than one year it recommends that relief be given at the point of need by the State Relief Administration regardless of county residence. Relief should be given always in the form of cash grants by all agencies on the basis of adequate budget calculations. Relief in kind should be restricted to periods of emergency need.[1]

Concerning work relief, Jerry Voorhis states, "A federal program of constructive public works is vastly preferable to leaving relief to the states and counties."[2] The perverted functioning of the Works Progress Administration was pointed out in Chapter II. We saw that the reason more migrants were not allowed to work on Federal Works projects was because the State Relief Administration feared that if non-residents were given the work then less of the residents would be provided with employment. This practice of refus-

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[1] Report of Bakersfield Conference, p. 5.

[2] Voorhis, op. cit., p. 1.

ing to certify non-residents to Federal Works projects could easily be overcome if the Works Progress Administration quotas were adjusted in such a manner that non-residents employed in any state would be charged not to the quotas of the state in which they are employed but to the state from which they come.[1]

Harry L. Hopkins, Director of the Works Progress Administration has said:

> We are always going to have a large number of unemployed. It won't be what it is now because private industry will absorb most of them. This program is an emergency measure to tide them over until it does, as it inevitably will. But we are always going to have some on relief. I hope and believe that it will be work relief--roads and so on--things that would not get done otherwise, things that are crying to be done.[2]

Some of the worthwhile works projects which could be put into effect with the co-operation and sponsorship of state and federal agencies are: blister rust control projects to save the timber supply; flood control projects to conserve water supply so necessary to California crops and to prevent a repetition of last winter's floods; mosquito abatement projects to eliminate malaria which threatens the health of the state; and the creation of state parks for recreational projects.[3]

Indirect Relief

Aside from an adequate administration of relief, the

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[1] Ibid., p. 4.

[2] Halt Relief to Aid Harvest, (Literary Digest, July 27, 1935), p. 113.

[3] Report of Bakersfield Conference, p. 6.

best immediate solution to the very serious problem of the migratory agricultural worker is a federal system of clean, simple camps for them, together with a federal employment service.[1] There is an evident necessity for a camp program that will meet the needs of the agricultural migrants. The present twelve federal camps accomodate 2,000 families which still leaves 20,000 families in California without housing, living on ditchbanks with no safe source of drinking water and no facilities for garbage or sewage disposal.[2]

As was stated in Chapter III, the California Division of Immigration and Housing has only three inspectors for the 8,000 camps in California. It is important that the personnel and the appropriation of this division be restored in order to guarantee adequate inspection of the private camps.[3]

Realizing the great need for housing for the agricultural migrants the John Steinbeck Committee to aid Agricultural Organization has recommended that the Farm Security Administration extend its camp program to build thirty more camps at the points of greatest need. The cost for carrying out such a program would account to three million dollars. Since the federal government spent about seven million dol-

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[1]Voorhis, op. cit., p. 3.

[2]In a talk by Jere King before the Channing Club of the First Unitarian Church of Berkeley on February 26, 1939.

[3]Samuel E. Wood, "California Migrants," (Paper read before the meeting of the Thursday Evening Club, Fresno, California, January 5, 1938), p. 15. (Mimeographed.)

lars for growers' benefits in 1937 the Committee felt that at least three million could be spent to better the living conditions of the workers.

There is also a need for mobile camps which could be transported with the workers as they travel following the crops.

Employment

The government official in charge of each camp should receive information regularly from the national employment bureau in co-operation with state agencies relative to employment in all regions of the country. Bulletins should be posted and every effort made to circulate the information as widely as possible among all migratory workers.[1]

The United States Employment service has commenced a fine work. The structure is set up. What is needed to be done further is to broaden the scope and increase the efficiency of this work. This will call for an annual appropriation by Congress of about $100,000 for the Farm Placement Service and the development of one unified employment service throughout the nation. Two further developments will need to be brought about. Farmers should gradually be induced to apply for labor to the United States Employment Service rather than elsewhere. Also, the Employment Service should try to succeed in bringing about the voluntary registration of laborers for employment. If these two things are

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[1]Voorhis, op. cit., p. 3.

done then the supply and demand for agricultural labor can be coordinated and much good accomplished for all concerned.[1]

Medical Care

Nowhere is the necessity of federal aid more apparent than in the matter of medical care for the interstate migrant. The Agricultural Workers Health and Medical Association has provided very worthy service. However, at the present time medical aid and other facilities are being extended only to those who have been in the state less than a year. The association is not functioning as originally planned and described in its incorporation papers and by-laws: "to provide benefits to state residents, both agricultural workers and small farmers, as well as to non-residents."[2] Before this is possible the federal government will have to increase its grant and the state government will have to contribute funds.

The state and county authorities should be urged by the United States Public Health Service to improve the living quarters of the agricultural migrants, especially those adjacent to large centres of population. It should urge the improvement of housing, streets, sewage, water supply and all other determining factors in the health and welfare of the entire community.[3] The federal government could help to

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[1] Voorhis, op. cit., p. 3.

[2] Report of Bakersfield Conference, p. 3.

[3] Report submitted to the President's Farm Tenancy Committee by the Simon J. Lubin Society, (San Francisco, January 12, 1937), p. 10. (Mimeographed.)

discharge its obligation by compensating the states and counties which are giving free medical care and hospitalization to needy non-residents by a system of grants-in-aid on condition that all such persons be given proper medical care in the interest of national public health.[1]

Social Security

The agricultural workers are not now covered by social security, but appropriate techniques can and should be developed to afford the agricultural workers the protection that has been extended to industrial workers. This has been done in England and Germany and should also be done in the United States.[2] The Social Security Act protects millions of people against the hazard of unemployment and old age, but not the one-fourth of our rural population who labor for wages as field workers in one of our largest industries. They have no accident, health, or unemployment insurance, and nothing to look forward to in old age except perhaps the poor house. We as a nation are feeling our way toward social security. We should surely plan to include the migratory agricultural workers. They have nothing now but insecurity.[3]

The positive approach to a solution of the problems of agricultural migrants is that of prevention, involving

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[1] Voorhis, op. cit., p. 3.

[2] Taylor, Unemployment and Relief, p. 1169.

[3] Thomsen, "Why Plan Security for the Migratory Laborer?" p. 3.

long-time and sweeping readjustments in our social and economic structure.[1] The following suggested program recognized the national character of California's migrant problem.

Land Conservation and Agricultural Reforms

A planned program of land conservation and resettlement should be instituted on a greater national scale than heretofore attempted. Since California is receiving the dispossessed from the Cotton Belt and Great Plains, it is proper that we should ask those regions to do what they can to provide a basis for maintaining there the maximum number of their people which they can support according to an American standard of living. This would mean for the Great Plains an anti-drought program consisting of the fullest development of its potential water resources, adequate agricultural practices to conserve moisture, and a proper balance between crop and grass.[2]

More drastic and sustained measures are necessary in the Cotton Belt. There, under the plantation system, the soil has been mined of its fertility and even the topography of its rolling surface has been destroyed. The south, if it is not to dislodge millions of her farm people must abandon the "one crop cotton complex," develop a more self-sustaining agriculture, expand animal husbandry, and undertake on a more

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[1] Elizabeth Widkenden, "Transciency, the Unsolved Problem of Mobility in Trouble," Survey, October, 1937, p. 308.

[2] Wood, op. cit., p. 14.

extensive scale the conservation and restoration of her depleted soils.[1]

The progress of mechanization in the Middle West cannot and should not be halted, "but the pattern in which it leaves farm people on the land should not be left to uncontrolled forces if human stability is to be achieved."[2] These areas should carry through the reforms which their own thoughtful people are advocating. California should use its influence in Congress to insure adequate national support for the stabilization of the rural structures of the Middle West and the South.

But if the agricultural reforms are not adequate to stabilize the people there and the surplus population of these areas must migrate, then California must see to it that the advantages of supporting the surplus populations of these areas, on relief if necessary, be balanced against the opportunities for self support anywhere else. As a partial solution, national minimum wages and social insurance for the agricultural migrants would help to remove the bargaining feature of residence in California.

Since most of the migrants are farm people, and since one of the problems is to introduce stability where there is none, all should be done to make possible the resettling of the migrants in California on the land. As a government agent in one of the federal camps said, "they (the migrants)

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[1] Taylor, "What Shall We Do with Them?" p. 7.

[2] Ibid.

could be one of the greatest assets of California, if given the land and the self-respect that goes with it."[1]

When we think of the land our thoughts naturally turn to the Federal Reclamation projects which are now under construction. These projects will in time make available about two and one half million acres of new land for settlement. On some twenty federal projects in operation at the present time, there is reported a rural population of 150,000 and an aggregate total value of crop production of one and one half billion dollars.[2] The Columbia River Basin project will ultimately provide irrigation water for about 1,200,000 acres of new land. The Boulder Dam development will probably supply water to more than one million acres in California and Arizona.[3]

Subsistence Farms

Since it will be several years before many migrant families will be benefited by these projects, and since our aim is to help the migrants in every proper way to settle down, a first step could be taken to stabilize them by establishing them on small subsistence farms in places where they would be able to obtain work on surrounding farms for a good portion of the year. In this way they could raise a portion of their subsistence on small garden plots of ground and live in decent houses. Perhaps in this way we could stem

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[1] Churchill, op. cit., p. 20.

[2] Frank W. Persons, op. cit., p. 22.

[3] McEntire, op. cit., p. 5.

the ebbing and flowing tide of migration and help a substantial group of Americans to follow that way of life which has formed for so many years the foundation of our national life.[1]

Co-operatives

Self-help co-operative producing units have been suggested as another solution to the migrants' problem. There have been established some successful ones in the country as the Citizens Service Exchange started in 1933 in Richmond, Virginia, which is doing rehabilitation work, training people for jobs, providing for their needs and giving them worth while work which does not bear the stigma of relief.[2] But this co-operative as well as the others which have been established, are for industrial workers and not agricultural migrants. For the industrial laborers J. Russell Smith says, "Self-help co-operatives is one of the most promising roads toward industrial freedom in the United States."[3] Also, according to Senator Culbert L. Olson:

> Self-help should be encouraged, organized, and assisted among the unemployed and under-employed. This would enable them to find for themselves, and to make better livings than if on WPA or direct relief. It would rehabilitate them, inspire their self-reliance. At the same time it would reduce both the relief load and the expense of administration.[4]

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[1] Voorhis, op. cit., p. 3.

[2] J. Russell Smith, "Make Jobs or Perish," Survey Graphic. 26: 430-434. August, 1937, pp. 430-433.

[3] Ibid, p. 434.

[4] Platform of Senator Culbert L. Olson, p. 8.

But Mr. Olson makes no mention of the migrants specifically. It is not known whether he advocates self-help co-operatives for the migrants and plans to do anything in this direction. The report of the Governor's Committee which will be published in July of this year will reveal any such plans that he may have.

Jonathan Garst, Regional Director of the Western Division of the Farm Security Administration, believes that self-help co-operatives can only be operated by stabilized citizens.[1] This naturally excludes the agricultural migrants who must travel because of the nature of their work.

Successful self-help co-operatives could only help the problem of the agricultural migrants by assimilating some of them, thus stabilizing them. This process would help to decrease the number of migrants who must wander about in search of employment.

Organization

There is a definite and considerable group of people who believe that the only way that the agricultural migrants will be able to materially riase their standard of living is through organization. They believe that unionization for collective bargaining is the only hope for the future of the agricultural working class. It is not the purpose of this dissertation to enter into a discussion of policies, methods, and the validity of such organization. It is appropriate to

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[1]At a meeting at the Berkeley Y.W.C.A. on March 31, 1939.

only mention that the organization of the migrants is one possible means whereby they could raise their standard of living.

The agricultural migrants need help from all directions. A program for the solution of their problems will have to be comprehensive enough to include all the above mentioned solutions.

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